

John Milton's Influence on Poets, Writers and Composers of His Period and Aftermath

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ABSTRACT

John Milton is doubtless one of the most important and influential poets in English Language and Literature. He has always been a major influence in literature both during his lifetime and after his death. His reputation among the readers and the poets is a known fact since it has been proven that several writers and poets frequently wrote under the influence of this great epic poet. Milton was an artist who had written about various subjects, he was both a poet and a renowned prose writer. As he had something to say about every field of life his admirers and followers were not necessarily from just one category. Many people, including politicians, poets, writers, composers found something valuable in Milton and his works. The purpose of this article is to reevaluate Milton's controversial works and lay down the influence of Milton on the mentioned figures of the period and aftermath.

" *Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour; England hath need of thee.*" – Wordsworth-

It is interesting that John Milton first became a famous figure in England through his divorce pamphlets. However, this kind of reputation was not something to be envied of as he soon happened to be known a divorce in England. In addition, his attacks on the bishops attracted a great deal of attention at that time. It is known that Milton's reputation and influence was not as great in his lifetime as it was after his death. His poems of 1645 were hardly noticed by the literary world except a few poets such as Benlowen and Marvell. The poetry of these writers who knew Milton very well and actually who did a very close reading of Milton's poetry shows signs from the writings of John Milton. Milton was more notorious in both England and Europe than he was famous for he was known as the defender of regicide after 1651. And the "Defenses" were apparently more widely read abroad than in England. During the Restoration, his poems may have gone unnoticed because of his political thoughts and reputation. After he had written his major poem "Paradise Lost", he gradually became famous in the Literary world. Although Dry den did a lot to advance Milton's reputation, it was after 1688 that his political ideas seemed to have been accepted and his reputation and influence as a great literary figure of England began to be established. One may think that Milton was not really a renowned person at all in his life time, on the contrary, despite all the realities about his writings and personal thoughts which was reflected in his pamphlets it is helpful to look at what Aubrey said of Milton in 1681 to refute a probable claim:

He was visited much by learned, more than he did desire. He was mightily importuned to go to France and Italy. Foreigners came much to see hi, and much admired him, and offered him great preferments to come over to them and theMnly inducement of several foreigners that came over into England, was chiefly to see Oliver Protector and Mr. John Milton...He was much more admired abroad than at home" (Rivers, 63).

As already stated above John Milton was also known for his controversial pamphlets on various subjects. The first of his pamphlets to catch the attention of the public was "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce." With the publication of this pamphlet Milton may be thought to have become very famous all of a sudden. On the contrary, this pamphlet brought Milton nothing but grief. It only caused Milton to become notorious among the public. Afterwards, he wrote "Defensio Prima." It seems that Milton made a great mistake by publishing those tracts at that time. After the publication of the pamphlets he once said, "It might perhaps more fitly have been written in another tongue. I could wish only that I had not written it in English, for then I would not have had vulgar readers, who are usually unconscious of their own good fortune an ridicule the misfortune of others" (Parker 18). As it is obvious from his own statement Milton regretted that he had ever written those

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pamphlets at such a time and in English. Milton's first "Defensio" brought him a celebrity and he became more famous in European countries than he was in his own country. His books circulated through all European countries such as Holland, Sweden, Germany and France. In the meantime, there were also countless efforts to suppress his book and others but in fact, it resulted in much publicity. Milton had actually made an impression through all these events and he began to be recognized by learned people all over the continent. As a result of all these stormy times in Milton's life he turned out to be known as a person who was more notorious than famous. Nevertheless, the crucial point here is that somehow he was known that his "Eikonoklastes" had been officially translated into French after the "Defensio Prima" had become famous abroad.

As he was a writer of a great deal of significance, Milton's influence and reputation continued to flourish among the poets and writers of later generations. In fact, the most part of his fame is due to his poetry. Poets frequently resorted to Milton for their works, and in doing so they imitated his poetry.

Milton was the poet who altered the epic genre and wrote "Paradise Lost" in blank verse. As the publications of this epic poem began to appear its effects were seen in the works of the writers. Most of the writers who tended to imitate Milton's art were affected by his use of blank verse, the language, style and the sublime ideas. Not only "Paradise Lost" was the factor to make Milton such an influential poet and bring him a reputation but also his minor poems like "L'Allegro" and "II Penseroso" played an essential role in Milton's influence. These two companion poems attracted the attention of the poets of that age for their images, language, general setting and theme. Apart from these works of

Milton his sonnets were also used as a model especially for their form and subject matter.

Several sonnets were produced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries following the model of Milton's sonnets. Milton's whole body of works was considered to be an example of excellence so that his position as a literary figure had been risen so high in the literary world. His use of blank verse and the elements of imitation by other writers continued to increase.

A great Romantic poet who was affected by Milton was William Wordsworth. In his life time Wordsworth wrote hundreds of sonnets and clearly enough it was Milton who started him to write sonnets. He was an ardent admirer of Milton and he often used the qualities which can be found in the sonnets of Milton such as dignity, simplicity, unity of objects, republican austerity etc. He learned to introduce pauses within line from Milton. The characteristics of Milton's sonnet form are the chief characteristics of Wordsworth's sonnets. He was tremendously indebted to Milton concerning all of his works as a poet but he owes Milton much more in the sense of writing sonnets. Wordsworth knew how deeply under the influence of Milton's art he was and he declared it in the advertisement to the volume of his collected sonnets as, "My admiration of some of the sonnets of Milton,

first tempted me to write in that form. The fact is...mentioned...as a public

Acknowledgement of one of the innumerable obligations, which, as a Poet and a Man, I am under to our great fellow- countryman" (McNulty 745). Admirers of "Paradise Lost" have been attracted to Milton's art, his versification, diction and the way he said things in his work. They used Milton's tools and tried to imitate his method of handling poetry even though most of them have been indifferent to his personality, to his conceptions of poetry and life. Now, Wordsworth is one of the poets who was inspired as no other poet has been by the life and character of Milton. Wordsworth's delight and interest both in Milton and his poetry began in his boyhood.. He could repeat portions of Milton's poetry by heart when he was very young. Milton's poetry was an earlier favorite of Wordsworth than that of Shakespeare. His enthusiasm for Milton was a permanent one. His lifelong admiration for Milton must have been so deep that at age of thirty two he knew all the sonnets by heart. This reality shows that Wordsworth was too familiar with Milton's poetry. His poems contain at least more than hundred borrowings from Milton all of which has been scattered through the whole body of his poetry. On the other hand these borrowings were taken not only from Milton's major epic poem "Paradise Lost" but also from his minor poems such as "L'Allegro", "II Penseroso", "Comus" and "Lycidas" to name a few of them.

Some of the interesting borrowings from Milton are to be found in his *Convention of Cintra*. In this prose work Wordsworth mentions Milton as a defender and the work itself contains at least five quotations from Milton's poetry. There are also four references to Milton's poetry and it closes with an extract from Milton's prose (Havens 184). Wordsworth's fifty five poems written in blank verse show a direct influence of *Paradise Lost*. Two of the poems from this category which have a Miltonic influence in diction and manner are *Address*

to *Kilchurn Castle* and *Yew-Trees*. and in his *The Prelude* Wordsworth again expressed his admiration for Milton in the following lines quoted:

Yea, Our blind Poet, who, in his later day, Stood
almost single; uttering odious truth-Darkness
before, and danger's voice behind, Soul awful- if the
earth has ever lodged An awful soul-1 seemed to
see him here Familiarly, and in his scholar's dress
Bounding before me, yet a stripling youth-A boy, no
better, with his rosy cheeks Angelical, keen eye,
courageous look, And conscious step of purity and
pride

(Havens 180).

Another great Romantic poet who considered Milton as his master and pursued him in his literary career is Shelley. Shelley used Milton's style and verse in many of his poems. Milton was obviously a great model for him. In the opinion of Shelley, Milton is to be associated with the greatest names in poetry such as Homer, Virgil, Dante and Shakespeare. He places Milton as the greatest poet after Shakespeare in the English Language and Literature. Shelley read Milton's works for many times so he got well acquainted with his art. As a result of this continuous reading eventually Shelley was more influenced by Milton than by any other English poet. Shelley's love of Milton and high esteem for him was so high that he made Milton the object of his veneration and he chose him as a model for himself. The sources, which can be used as an indication of Shelley's admiration for Milton, consist of his works and letters, Mary Shelley's letters and his biographical studies. These documents all reveal the relationship between both poets very well. The two passages below which are taken from Shelley's *The Death of the Princess Charlotte* and Preface to *Prometheus Unbound* suffice to show his general opinion of Milton: "When Milton died it had been well that the Universal English nation had been clothed in solemn black, and that the muffled bells had tolled from town to town"(...),

"We owe Milton to the progress and development of the same spirit [of awakening to the tyranny of the Catholic religion]: the sacred Milton was, let it ever be remembered, a republican and a bold inquirer into morals and religion" (Jones 490).

Another aspect, which Shelley was attracted to about Milton, was his being a rebel against tyranny and a republican. He considered *Paradise Lost* a work inexhaustible and beyond praise. He admired all the poems of Milton. It is interesting to note that especially in *Paradise Lost* Shelley's main interests were in the magnificent character of Satan and naturally in everything relating to the defiance of tyranny as he himself suffered and hated tyranny in his life. He was also interested in the loveliness of the earth and specifically the Garden of Eden. The poetry of *Paradise Lost* was the main thing to attract Shelley's attention beyond measure that he had read this great epic repeatedly and he referred to or borrowed from lines of the poem hundreds of times. Shelley's earlier work *Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude* shows similarities to some phrases of *Paradise Lost*. For example, some of the phrases like "sudden she rose", "calm, he still pursued" remind the reader of the lines in *Paradise Lost*. The following lines quoted from Shelley's poetry may be an example to recognize the effect of Milton in the poetry of Shelley.

The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips, and all of great,
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt
And knew.
The Poet wandering on, through Arabia
And Persia, and the wild Carmanian waste,
And o'er the aerial mountains which pour down
Indus and Oxus from their icy caves
In joy and exultation held his way" (Havens 230).

Many people, by whom Milton was literally worshipped, found the embodiment of all positive qualities of mind in him. They also admired him because of the fact that he was a shaker of thrones, against the tyranny of church and state which was expressed by his prose works. Poets of later generations such as Blake and Shelley appreciated and praised Milton's struggles to defend the liberty of free speech. These poets were

moved by this quality of Milton because it was a demand for the release of creative power in a way. Milton powerfully appealed to the Romantic poets who sought to reestablish the notion of the divine inspiration of poetry. Milton was the last prophetic poet in English literature and he played an important role in the works of the Romantic poets such as Shelley who in his "A Defense of Poetry" identified poetry with prophecy. All the Romantic disciples of Milton shared his belief that the epic poet's abilities are the inspired gift of God.

It was said that Milton first became renowned through his divorce pamphlets. But the notoriety of the divorce pamphlets actually did nothing for the sales of Milton's verse.

Maybe most of the people who first were acquainted with Milton through his divorce pamphlets did not know that he was a well talented poet at the same time. After the reissue of *Paradise Lost* in 1675, Milton was well received by the readers. However, it was after the fourth edition of the poem in 1688 that Milton's reputation rose sharply. So toward the end of the seventeenth century Milton's presence became larger following his death that Edward Dowden said in a lecture,

The influence of Milton on the literature of the eighteenth century was threefold- an influence on poetic style, independent in a great degree of poetic matter; secondly, an influence alike on sentiment and style; thirdly, an influence on thought, appearing at irregular intervals, but always associated with political liberalism or radicalism. The first of these modes of influence is chiefly connected with *Paradise Lost*, the second with Milton's earlier poems, the third with his prose writings (qtd. by Shawcross 41).

Writers and poets of the century frequently quoted or referred to Milton in their works. Milton became a criterion of the taste and style for them. For example, Alexander Forbes in his "Essays Moral and Philosophical on Several Subjects" which appeared in 1734 often quoted Milton to support his ideas about human faculties, imagination and freedom of choice, etc. Another writer who considered Milton as a criterion is John Newbery. Newbery quoted "Paradise Lost" extensively, he also referred to Milton's minor poems such as "Song: On May Morning". The periodicals in this century, in which Milton's reputation was explored, all conclude that he was well known and well quoted as an authority figure in literature at that time. Not only the articles written about Milton in this century but also the ones in the eighteenth century confirm that he was a source of knowledge for the writers of the age. They regarded him a valuable source of knowledge both for literary and religious ideas. There appeared many imitations of the versification of his major epic poem and the other poems as well. In the same century again, Milton's influence was in educational works as well as in the poetry, drama or novel. Writers of the age thought that Milton was to be imitated by reproduction of form, language, style and subject matter.

An important figure who seems to have established Milton's reputation through his writings is Addison. His discussions of *Paradise Lost* helped to advance Milton's fame. According to Addison, Milton's epic poetry was superior even to those of ancients' in fable, action and greatness as a work of art. Addison was one of the poets who praised Milton in "Spectator" papers. Furthermore, Addison devoted a remarkable space for Milton in his *Accounts of the Greatest English Poets*, which was published in 1694. Moreover, later in his life he imitated two of Milton's poems. In *Spectator* he commended *L'Allegro* and wrote of *Comus* as the best masque ever written, since *Spectator* was a very popular periodical and Addison a famous writer his writings about Milton created a strong effect. Addison really made Milton a universal favorite for the readers that it was almost a fashion to read Milton's poetry.

Paradise Lost was published over a hundred times after the poet's death between 1705 and 1800 whereas other masterpieces such as Shakespeare's *Macbeth* saw only thirteen publications in the whole eighteenth century. Other than *Paradise Lost* Milton's masque, *Comus* were published and performed in the stage more than thirty times. Moreover, *Paradise Lost* had the honor to be sold by subscription and to appear as the first poem in a critical edition that time. These facts indicate one thing to the interested reader of Milton that he surpassed many famous writers during the eighteenth century. John Wesley thought that *Paradise Lost* was the only work to which preference has generally been given of all the poems appeared until that time in the world. Milton's genius and the subject of his epic poem, his conduct of the poem were considered to be above example or comparison. His minor poems too were thought to be the finest ones of their type in English literature; one of the admirers of Milton said that *L'Allegro* and *II Penseroso* were the most exquisite and accurately descriptive poems in his own or any other language and will probably remain unrivaled forever.

As it has already been implied by the above passages Milton's greatness as a poet was already accepted from the very beginning of the eighteenth century. In the eighteenth century not only the literate elite was familiar with Milton's poetry but also people from lower classes had access to his works and they were reading Milton. For instance, it has been reported that shepherds were reading Milton's epic and a milk woman was well acquainted with Milton's poetry that she used to keep *Paradise Lost* in her bag. So, Milton's poetry was being read with pleasure and admiration by people of every degree and condition. The common people were apparently fond of Milton's poetry.

Paradise Lost was transformed into a prose dialogue including some of the original verse to be used as a text book in the schools. Edmund Burke had always recommended the study of Milton to his son and to all his younger friends for Milton exhibited the highest possible range of mind in English language. And Richard Baron said, "Milton in particular ought to be read and studied by all our young gentlemen as an oracle. He was a great and noble genius, perhaps the greatest that ever appeared among men. His works are full of wisdom, a treasure of knowledge" (Havens 27).

One other important English poet other than the Romantic poets, who tended to imitate Milton and followed his way, is Pope. Pope was known to have been an admirer of Milton as he had numerous borrowings from Milton's entire body of work. From the very beginning to the end of his life, Pope reflected the obvious influence of Milton in his works. Even earlier in his life he used to keep Milton's picture in his room so that the permanent remembrance of his picture may make Pope always humble. As Pope was becoming a professional writer, he never gave up reading Milton. One can easily notice Milton's presence in Pope's poetry by looking at his poems from the *Pastorals* to the *Dunciad*. As early as 1700, Pope deliberately had tried to imitate Milton in his first epic poetry attempt *Alcander, Prince of Rhodes*. Again later in his life he committed to remodel *Samson Agonistes* into a tragedy for stage performance but unfortunately, like his first attempt it came to nothing. The real record of Milton's influence on Pope is in his completed poems.

Pope's *The Dunciad* frequently imitates and has allusions to Milton's *Paradise Lost*. There are lots of similarities between both works. For instance, Cibber in *The Dunciad* plays the roles of Christ and Adam. Satan is associated with several figures in *The Dunciad* such as Bentley, Lintot, the deist and the narrator. Lintot is very much like Satan laboring through Chaos, Bentley is both like Satan and Beelzebub in his brief introduction. *The Dunciad* may be seen as a complement to Milton and epic tradition as well as a witty parody. The two passages below taken from *The Dunciad* and *Paradise Lost* well explain the imitative qualities of the poem. In Book II of *The Dunciad* we see,

"High on a gorgeous seat, that far out-shone
Henley's gilt tub, or Fleckno's Irish throne,
Or that whereon her Curls the public pours,
All-bounteous, fragrant Grains and Golden show'rs,
Great Cibber sate.",

and the passage from Book II *Paradise Lost* runs,

"High on a throne of royal state, that far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand,
Show'rs on her Kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sate" (Griffin 175).

As it is obvious from these passages Satan and Cibber were somehow linked to each other. This is not the only similarity between *The Dunciad* and *Paradise Lost*. Certainly, Pope goes on to refer to lots of phrases in Milton's epic.

The Victorian Period and the writers of that age too welcomed Milton and he continued to be a famous and influential poet among the Victorians. Lots of rebellious working class men and women felt an affinity to Milton. They were from a lower class who were learning to read in increasing numbers and they turned to Milton's writings not for religious reasons but for reasons other than that. Milton was more than just a great religious poet to people, he was also a patriot, lover of liberty and a dissenter. For many members of the laboring class Milton was a hero whose life and writings were an inspiration for republican thoughts and democratic sympathies. In the Victorian Period an interest in Milton's life and prose works was revived. The biographers of the early Victorian Period were interested in Milton as a republican and an advocate of liberty, and emphasized his being a prose writer. The rise of the middle class to a position of dominance in the 1820s

and 1830s was another major factor of Milton's constant fame. They all found something of their own in the struggles of Milton against tyranny, prohibitions, etc.

It is possible to see Milton in American literature and life too. Early Americans thought of Milton as a poet of titanic stature. Beginning from the colonial days through the republic Milton's fame eclipsed that of Homer and Virgil in America too. He was a poet who was considered as important as the scriptural prophets were. Early Americans read Milton's poetry largely. His words used to be quoted to illustrate grammar and rhetoric by the schoolmasters; "they recommended his diction and style. The moralists presented Milton's Eve as an ideal womanly virtue. More significantly, poets of the time saw Milton as a model to pattern their language, imagery, syntax and verse forms. They turned to Milton for poetic, moral and religious instructions. Poets and writers consciously sought in Milton ways to refine and elevate their sentiments and style. Milton was well accepted by the early American people. He actually inspired the literary community of the New World in both New England and middle and Southern Colonies.

Milton influenced the poetry of America as much as he affected the poetry of the eighteenth century England. He had an effect on the moral, spiritual and intellectual life of the society. As the centers of culture increased Milton and the interest in his works finally became nationally recognized, copies of his works were available in the colonies long before he became a famous figure among the people. As early as 1664 it was possible to find Milton's prose works in the personal libraries. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, colleges and city corporations had already possessed Milton's larger collections of works. In 1698, the Corporation of the City of New York purchased some of the prose works of Milton and "Paradise Lost" for its library. In the very beginning of the eighteenth century, America's two leading universities Yale and Harvard already had the complete works of Milton. Various libraries in both New York and Philadelphia had volumes of Milton, which suggest that he had become an established and famous name in America at that time.

Apart from the libraries, also the booksellers started to supply demands for Milton's works. For example, in 1683 a Boston merchant ordered copies of Milton's prose works and "Paradise Lost". The newspapers of the time continued to advance Milton's reputation through their activities. Many leading newspapers such as "The Pennsylvania Gazette", "South Carolina Gazette" and "The Boston Evening Post" advertised Milton's works. The almanacs followed the same tradition and listed Milton's poetical works. Because of all these developments Milton became a renowned poet and his works started to be read in increasing numbers. It is interesting that Benjamin Franklin assembled prayers taken from "Paradise Lost" and later he recommended to the Trustees of the Philadelphia Academy for study in the sixth class selections from Milton (Sensabaugh 36). The epic poetry of the American Revolution was mostly characterized by the imitation of Milton. His greatness was so many times reiterated and his works were frequently referred that he became a popular idol and a symbol of authority in American literature. In 1807 "The Monthly Anthology" mentioned Milton as, "So delicate were his perceptions of taste, so exuberant was his fertility of fancy, so enlarged were the faculties of his mind, and so extensive the range of his erudition that it is hazardous to deny what his sentiment established" (Hunter 122). His name and poetry overwhelmed the verse of the time that he was often mentioned in weekly and monthly journals at that time.

Nathaniel Evans is one of Milton's American admirers and imitators. Evans's small volume "Poems on Several Occasions" published in 1772 contains at least six poems which are definitely imitations of Milton's poems. Evans's "Beginning of a Poem on The Passion and Resurrection of Christ" is really an exact imitation of Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity". Evans's poem runs;

New came the hour, th'important hour
When heav'n's eternal Son,
(Who deign'd the flashly form to wear,
And all our sins and troubles bear),
His sacred blood for man must pour
By Satan's wiles undone. O Thou! all-hallowed
Spirit, hear!
Inspirer of the prophets old,
Who tun'd the royal David's ear,
When thro' his breast sweet transports roll'd;
Thou Paraclete divine, o'er-rule my humble lyre,
And touch a mortal breast with thy celestial fire.
For all in vain
We make the strain

Our gratitude to prove
And sing Messiah's love,
Unless thy holy flame our frozen hearts inspire" (Milligan 201).

The similarities in both development and diction between the poems are strikingly apparent. Both poems' opening lines specify the time that of Christ's birth. Besides, in the second lines of each poem Christ is named as "Son of Heav'ns eternal king" by Milton and as Heav'n's eternal son" by Evans. The third lines of the poems both mention Christ's supernatural being. Both of the poems state that Christ's mission is to redeem the mankind and they indicate the nature of Christ's sacrifice. The poems are obviously parallel to each other and this parallelism is too clear for someone to notice even after the first reading of the poems.

Another poem by Evans, which is an imitation of Milton's "On Time", is by the same title "On Time". Both poems begin with an apostrophe to time and refer to past events. For example, the fourth line of Milton's poem runs,
"And glut thyself with what thy womb devours.",
and the second line of Evans's poem runs,
"In thy deep womb the world's vast actions lie" (Milligan 202).

Both of the poets express an idea that time will endure until the world is destroyed, they tell that time destroys only the mortal things, etc. When we look at Evans's "To Melancholy" and Milton's "II Penseroso" we immediately see even a closer similarity between them. Evans borrowed his theme and treatment for his poem directly from Milton. The invocation to melancholy, the way he describes her costume and the request that she lead him to the depths of the forest are all the exact imitations of Milton. As an example to show the borrowing of Evans from Milton it is sufficient to look at the first line of Evans's poem which is,

"Come, thou Queen of pensive air", and the
thirty first line of Milton's poem which is,
"Com pensive Nun, devout and pure" (Milligan 205).

One of the statements of Evans proves that he consciously imitated Milton's poetry. He said, "The Holy Scriptures are the true fountain from which to extract the richest draughts of poesy, both as to dignity of matter and embellishment of figures: witness the noble use the great Milton made of them in his marvelous poems, and though few must expect to reach such heights as did that prodigy of learning and genius, yet all according to their ability, may follow his illustrious example..." (Milligan 206).

Another American writer who seems to have been influenced by Milton is Edwin J. Whiffen from the twentieth century. He published a volume of dramatic poems which were *Samson Marrying*, *Samson at Timnah*, *Samson Hybristes* and *Samson Blinded* in 1905. The two of the titles of his poems *Samson Marrying* and *Samson Hybristes* may have been taken from Milton's list of dramas on which he worked in 1642. The following lines from Whiffen's *Samson at Timnah* seem identical to some lines of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*.

O glorious vengeance on our foes inflicted!
Come, friends, there seems not much for sorrow here,
And lamentation
All is best, though oft endured
Our grievous ills with questioned doubt
His high intent his purpose serves,
With vindication full and fair event (Havens559).

Translations of Milton's works were also an essential factor in the expansion of his reputation in literature. His poetry, including the minor poems, was translated into other languages. By 1800, *Paradise Lost* had already been translated into most of the European languages. It was translated into German in 1682. In 1690 Milton's all major works were translated completely into Latin. The same translator published the Latin version of *Lycidas* and *Comus* in the following years (Parker 54).

Composers contributed much to Milton's fame too. They carried Milton beyond literature. Many composers set Milton's poems into music and by doing so, they increased Milton's reputation. Several of Milton's minor works such as *Comus*, *L'Allegro* and *II Penseroso* were set into music by Lawes, Purcell, Arne and Handel. "Song on May Morning" was set into music by Michael Festing, "The Arcades" and even "Lycidas" were all set into music (Morris 141). "Comus" became one of the most persistently popular musical entertainments. "Samson Agonistes" and the version of the Psalms were often sung in Handel's popular oratorios. Parts of

"L'Allegro" and the "Arcades" were used as songs in Garrick's opera "The Fairies". In addition "Paradise Lost" were arranged for oratorios at least four times by Mrs. Delany once for Handel and once as the basis of Haydn's "Creation" (Havens 29). "Comus" became widely known through stage performances among the public. It has been more familiar to the people than Milton's non-dramatic writings. And also it was brought to homes by amateur productions. People used to sing its songs.

As early as 1728, part of "Paradise Lost" had been set into music by an unknown composer John Ernest Galliard. This composer just ignored the grand design of the epic and concentrated on one of its beauties, the Morning Hymn of Adam and Eve in Book V. Another composer who set "Paradise Lost" into music was John Christopher Smith. He started his setting of "Paradise Lost" in 1757. More important than these composers is Haydn and his incomparably greatest "The Creation". It was first performed publicly in Vienna in 1759 and the whole audience was impressed by it. Nevertheless, Haydn himself was so impressed more than anybody that he said, "One moment I was as cold as ice, the next I was on fire. More than once I was afraid I should have a stroke" (Morris 158).

As in the eighteenth century, "Paradise Lost" continued to serve as the main source for the composers it was used by the composers of the nineteenth century for the same reasons. Some of these composers chose to use the sequences in Eden and the description of Creation for their choral air solo pieces while some others turned to new sections of Milton's epic for dramatic material. Matthew King's "The Intercession" which was performed at Covent Garden in 1816, the works of Pio Cianchettini and Sir Henry Rowley Bishop are the ones who dominated the early part of the century (Revard 110).

In the twentieth century Milton's "Paradise Lost" was continuously being used as the subject for songs, oratorios and operas again. Composers of this age, especially after World War II showed an interest in that great epic. At least four full length operas or oratorios have been based upon "Paradise Lost". For example, Franz Reizenstein used Milton's description of the coming of the evening in his oratorio "Genesis". In 1972 Phillip Rhodes's opera- oratorio "Paradise Lost" and in 1978 Krzysztof Penderecki's sacra rappresentazione "Paradise Lost" contained a great deal of Milton's text unlike their predecessors in the previous centuries. Both composers tried to transform the epic poem into a musical interpretation through their works. Penderick's opera had full press coverage in the United States and Europe after the performance. It also received attention from scholarly publications as the latest attempt to adapt "Paradise Lost" to music. Both composers' works closely followed the plot of Milton's poem (Revard 127).

We have tried to explain Milton's enormous influence and reputation in several areas of life in the preceding pages. However, We are also aware of the fact that only a small percentage of Milton's fame can be explained in a paper. Milton seems to have always been in the lives of people through different types of art like poetry, music, painting and drama. He has been an inexhaustible source for the artists for hundreds of years. He had lost his eyesight before he died but he never lost his faithful audience and admirers that existed both during his lifetime and the years following his death.

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